

There is one mystery I still can't decipher, however, and that's the reason behind Lorraine's change of heart. Perhaps she's given up on the idea of tormenting me. Or maybe this is part of some subtle new technique -- making me suffer by taking me away from Mattie on a fairly regular basis.

"Or maybe she just doesn't have it in for you as much as you seem to think," Mattie suggests, glancing over his shoulder at me as we share a postcoital shower. His words are almost lost beneath the rush of water. "Did you ever stop to consider you might be a little bit -- oh, I don't know -- paranoid on the subject?"

I snort in response. "No." Paranoid? Me? Seriously, I want to laugh at the very idea. So I do. Loudly.

Mattie rolls his eyes. "Whatever. Don't stop and think about it for a minute or anything."

"She's evil, baby." I take a break from scrubbing his back, lean in, and kiss his luscious mouth. "Trust me, okay? She's out to get me."

"Well, I liked her. I thought she was nice."

"You what?" I eye him curiously. "What are you talking about? Like her? Nice? When did you two even meet?"

He gazes at me for a moment, his eyes shuttered. Finally he shuts off the water and turns to face me. His hands on my waist, he draws me close. "Promise you won't get mad?"

"Oh shit." My heart sinks. I don't know what's coming next, but I figure no conversation that starts out like that can possibly end well. "What did you do?"

Mattie shrugs. "Not much. I just...talked to her."

"Talked to her?" Man, I'd love to have heard that conversation. Not. The thought has me wincing. My past and present lovers chatting about me, discussing my performance? Yeah, I definitely don't want to know. "What did you say?"

"I thanked her for all her help, and then...I sort of suggested she might want to think about assigning you to do something different for a change."

"You-you did? And that worked?" I'm surprised for all of an instant until I remember how charming he can be, how very difficult to resist. Of course she'd listen to him. Who wouldn't?

“I knew, from what you’d told me, that they’d likely be reassigning you soon. And to be honest, I really didn’t like the idea of you...well, you know...teaching someone else the ropes.”

It takes me a moment to figure out what he’s saying and even longer to realize he’s serious. “Baby...” His admission leaves me momentarily speechless. Part of me is loving his possessiveness, the hint of jealousy in his voice, but mostly I’m just amazed -- by him, by us. “You know there’s no one else for me, don’t you?” Mattie can poke fun all he likes at the idea of there being a “special someone” out there for each of us; I know it’s true. At least it is for me.

“Yeah, that’s right,” he murmurs teasingly as I lean in to kiss him. “Make sure you remember that.”

“Hey!” I skip the kiss and bite down softly on his lip instead. “That goes both ways, pal. I’m not the one here who’s most likely to forget.” He’s something of a slut, my Mattie. Just one of the many reasons I adore him, if you wanna know.

“Oh?” Mattie’s eyes gleam with sudden heat. His expression turns catlike and sly. “So what’re you saying, then? Are you gonna punish me if you think it’s slipped my mind?”

“Hell yeah, I will.” I spin him back around, pushing him until he’s facing the wall again. I nip sharply at the juncture where his shoulder meets his neck. “You just see if I don’t.” I’m still startled by the enormity of my feelings for him, shocked at how completely I’ve fallen. I cannot believe some of the things he has me doing and saying. Things like this, “You won’t be able to sit for a week when I’m done with you.”

Mattie, his hands braced on the marble tiles, tilts his hips enticingly. “Mm. Yum.” He laughs, obviously delighted by my threat. “I think I may be in need of a reminder right about now.” Then he turns serious, and my heart swells when he glances back at me, his gaze gentle. “That wasn’t the only reason I talked to her, you know. I knew how much you hated all the babysitting assignments she’d been giving you. You deserve to have something that will make you happy.”

But I already have that, don’t I? “You make me happy,” I remind him even as I’m reaching for the bath oil. It seems only right to return the favor, to give him what I know will make him happy as well. If this is being unselfish, bring it on.

I nudge his ankles with my foot, urging his legs farther apart. It's more a kick than a nudge, to be accurate. Just sharp enough to sting. Just aggressive enough to elicit that rapturous sigh, that shiver of anticipation I've come to expect from him. I reach between his legs to fondle the heavy sac. A slightly rough, possessive touch -- it makes him shudder and moan. The minute I feel him start to respond, however, I stop. This is supposed to be punishment, after all.

After pouring more oil on my hands, I knead his back, taking my time to leisurely measure the span of his shoulders. To lovingly pummel his shower-warmed muscles. To watch the oil bead on his wet skin. Mattie writhes beneath my ministrations. The water has turned his golden hair to bronze. Little rivulets of water sluice down his neck to run the length of his spine. I lean in close, longing to trace their path with my tongue. Impatient now, he pushes his upper body flush against the smooth wall and arches his back until the swell of his ass just grazes my erection.

Electric tingles follow that fleeting contact. With a mock growl, I grab hold of his hips and grind myself against him. "Is this what you want?" I whisper menacingly. With the length of my wet cock wedged firmly between his cheeks, I thrust forward, shaft slipping up and back along his crease.

Mattie's response is a breathy little laugh. "Oh fuck, yeah. Hurry it up, would ya? Put it in already. You're killing me here."

I don't know where this urgency comes from. We've been going at it like rabbits since that first time. You'd think we would have tired of it by now -- that at least a little of the novelty would have worn off. You'd think he'd be too sore for this too. But no. We're both as randy as ever. I just can't seem to get enough of him, and I'm endlessly grateful he appears to feel the same.

"Too bad." I push away from him, taking my time to pour more oil on my hands, taking even more time to spread his cheeks and slowly push just the tip of one finger into his ass. "You are just going to have to wait until I'm good and ready to take you. Which may not be for quite some time yet." My voice sounds miles cooler than I'm feeling. I push deeper, watch the digit disappear, knuckle by knuckle, and promptly lose my breath.

What is it about this I find so erotic? Whether it's my cock disappearing into his mouth or my finger into his hole, I never tire of the sight. It never fails to make my heart

pound fast, to make my balls draw tight. Despite all my big words, I know I won't last long. There's a tremor in the backs of my thighs, and I haven't even touched myself yet. Good thing too. At this point, I think I'd go off at the first stroke.

"Oh God, Edge." Mattie jerks his hips frantically, forcing my finger to slip even deeper inside him. "Move, damn it. I need it. Now."

"I know you do." I do too, but still I take my time. I want to make this good for him. I want to make it last. I want to draw things out until we're both insane with need. I've mostly gotten over my fear that this time will be the last time -- the only time -- he'll let me do this to him, but what if I'm wrong? What if this is the last time? What if there isn't any more. "I'm not gonna let you rush me."

Forcing the thoughts away, I pump slowly in and out, first with one finger, then two. He pushes back again and again, impaling himself, forcing me deeper. I love the suctioning heat of his tight passage, the greedy hunger with which his opening expands to accommodate me, as though it would swallow me whole.

An endless string of mostly curses falls from Mattie's lips as he writhes on my finger, pleading with me to give him more, to do it now, to fuck him harder, faster, deeper.

He lifts one hand away from the wall, and I know he's going for his cock, so I grab his wrist with my free hand to stop him. If I can't have it, neither can he.

"Leave it there," I order more than a little breathlessly, forcing his hand back where it was. The slap of his open palm reconnecting with the wet tile is loud and hopelessly erotic -- like the crack of a whip. I cover his hand with my own to hold it in place. "Don't move till I tell you."

"God, Edge," Mattie groans in tortured delight. "You're such. A fucking. Tease."

I have to laugh. Just who does he imagine is responsible for that? I lean forward until I have him trapped against the wall. I plunge my tongue into his ear and whisper, "Baby, I'm just getting started."

I'm lying, though. The way we're touching now, skin to skin from practically our knees up to our necks, is utter bliss, but every second spent this way shreds another strip out of my self-control. Within minutes I'm pressing my lips to his ear and whispering urgently, "Need to."

Mattie nods, whimpering softly as I pull my fingers from him. I can't reach for the oil one-handed, but luckily there's more than enough precum dribbling from my slit to do the job. A quick couple of strokes are all it takes to slick my shaft; then I'm plunging inside him.

His body welcomes me, a tight, wicked warmth that feels like home. Our left hands are still clasped together against the wall, but I reach around him with my right to take his shaft in hand. We're locked together, pumping and sliding, bodies struggling for release. He reaches his free hand back to clutch at my thigh. I let my teeth close on his shoulder.

All too soon he's stiffening in my grasp. Icy flames lick down my spine. My balls contract. At the first tightening of his internal muscles around my swollen shaft, I go off like a rocket. Cum spills over my hand, a thick, hot flood, even as I let loose inside him.

We jerk hard against each other, again and again, slowly winding down until all motion has ceased except for the tandem heaving of our chests, the faint aftershocks trembling in our muscles. Mattie's forehead is pressed against the wall. My own face is pressed against his back. Despite the weakness in my legs, the lightness in my head, I think I could happily stay like this forever.

Without looking, Mattie reaches for the faucet. I have less than a second's warning before water is raining down on both our heads. Laughing, I lift my face into the spray, let the water fill my mouth. Then I squirt a stream into his ear.

He chokes back a laugh as well, trying to bat the water away with his hands. Then both of us are reaching for each other at the same time, coming perilously close to losing our footing and landing in a heap on the slippery floor.

I'm still laughing when the internal alarm goes off, telling me I'm needed elsewhere. Groaning, I grab his shoulders. I lean in to brush a quick kiss across his lips, then let him go again.

"Hey, come back here," he protests, reaching to pull me back, but I elude his grasp.

"Sorry, babe," I say as I get out of the shower. I take a towel from the shelf by the door and briskly wipe myself off. "Hold that thought. Gotta go."

"What? Now?" Mattie follows me back into the bedroom, a frown on his face as he watches me dress. "You're kidding me."

"Nope. Duty calls. Earthly emergencies wait on no angel's pleasure."

He falls back on the bed with a groan. “Maybe you were right about Lorraine after all,” he mutters, looking adorably frustrated. “Maybe she is trying to get even with you. Or maybe I’m the one she’s trying to make suffer.”

“More likely she’s trying to get me out of the way so she can hit on you herself.” I’m joking, but it could very well be true. He’s so freaking gorgeous I almost forget I’m in a hurry to leave. “You be good while I’m gone, you hear me? I promise I’ll be back as soon as I can.”

Mattie sighs fretfully. “I don’t get it. Why do you have to go now? I thought time was an illusion?”

“It is. But it’s a persistent one.” I think it was Einstein who said that.